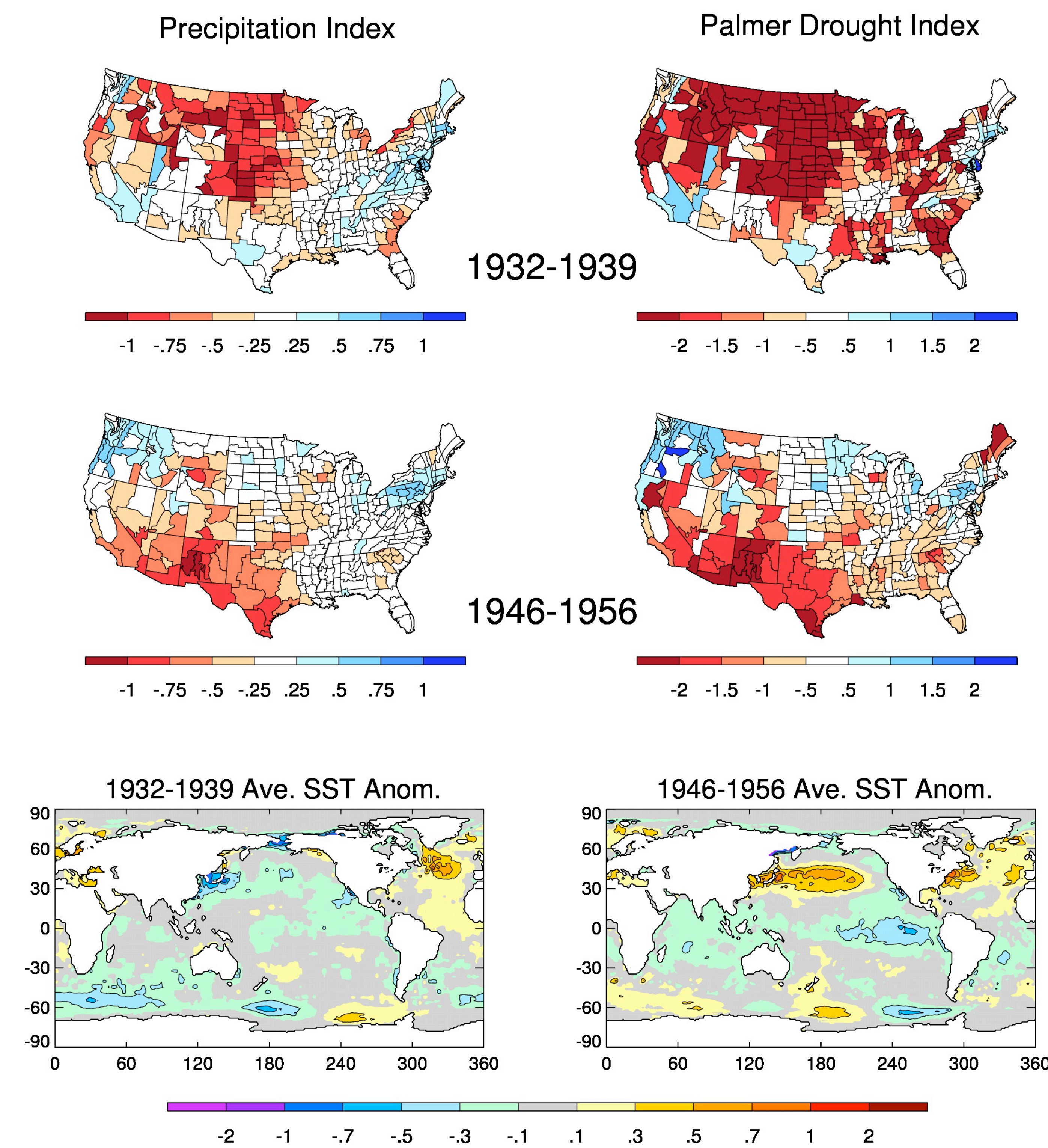


Distinct Causes for Two Principal U.S. Droughts of the 20th Century

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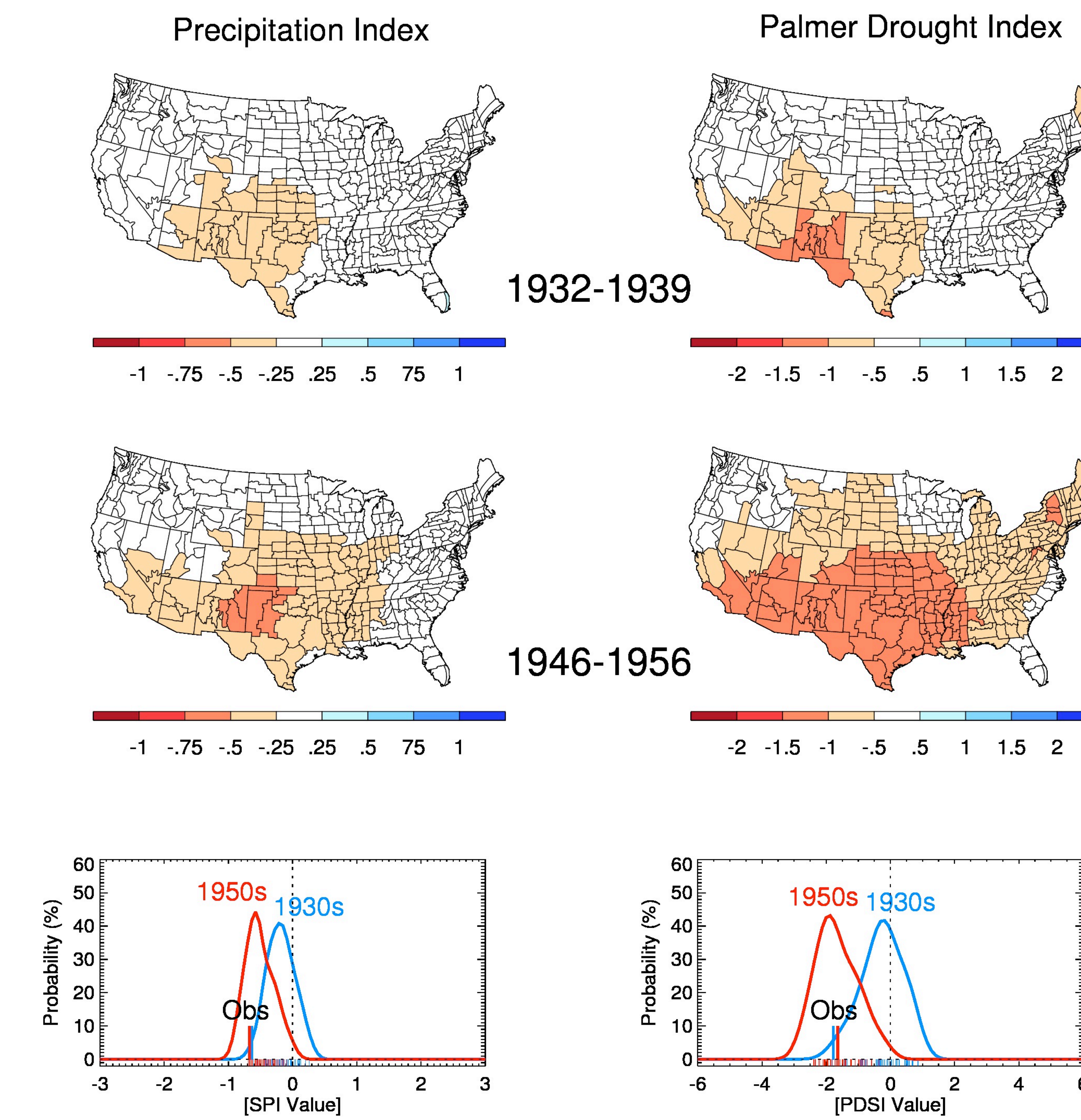
Observations



Q1: Did the different SST conditions prevalent during the 1930's vs. the 1950's cause the different spatial expressions of drought?

Q2: What are key features of a U.S. drought early warning system?

Simulations



A1: Climate models indicate that drought severity over the Northern Plains during the 1930's was likely triggered by random atmospheric variability. The 1950's Southern Plains drought was strongly ocean forced.

A2: The Southern Great Plains lie in an epicenter of potentially skillful drought prediction for which an ocean observing system would constitute early warning.